

S. Edmonds

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Seasonable *and* Serious
EXPOSTULATION

With some of the
Diffenting Teachers,

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Concerning their
Present BEHAVIOUR
IN THEIR
Printed SERMONS
AND
PAMPHLETS.

*Let the Peace of God rule in your Hearts, to the
which also ye are called in one Body, and be ye
thankful, Coloff. 3. 15.*

L O N D O N :
Printed, and Sold by *J. Baker*, at
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2nd Edition

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Seasonable and Serious

Expostulation, &c.

Gentlemen,

I DOUBT very much whether you will do it now, because I think you never did take any Advice kindly, that came from a Member of the Church of *England*, tho' offer'd to you upon evident Reason, and with the most

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sincere

sincere Design of doing Good to your selves as well as the whole Nation; and therefore I don't give it you so much from any Hopes I have of your regarding what I shall say, (tho' I wish you would) as out of pure Zeal to his present Majesty King *G E O R G E*, and from a just Sense of that happy Security both of our Civil and Religious Liberties we now enjoy under him; and in which you have as large a Share as is consistent either with common Prudence or Safety, and more than which I am pretty sure you will never obtain from the present Government, however you may flatter your selves with the vain Hopes of having *in due Time*, (to use the Words of a late famous Treaty) *the like Favour in all Things*

Things as the Members of the Church of England, now the most favoured, have, possess, and enjoy.

But, tho' I am fully satisfied, that you will never obtain your own Ends in the present Methods you are using ; yet I have great Reason to believe and fear, that you will thereby advance the Designs of those who have nothing so much at Heart, as your Destruction as well as ours ; Ours, I say, who have suffer'd too much already under the false Charge of being secret Friends to your Principles, not to be uneasy under the Prospect of suffering still more from your unreasonable as well as unjustifiable Practises at this Time, which are not so little taken Notice of, and disliked, as perhaps you may imagine ; and can have

no other Tendency at present, but to enflame the unhappy Division amongst the Members of the Establish'd Church, and are, I am afraid, entered upon with the wicked View, of raising your selves still higher, upon the fatal Consequences of new Heats and Animosities in that Body.

For to what other End can we ascribe the sly Insinuations in some late Sermons of yours, and the little Pamphlets you are daily sending abroad in defence of your Separation, and full of stale ill-natured Reflections on the Church of *England* ? Has there been a new Provocation given you by any Writer on the Side of the Church, to enter the Lists of Controversy again with us ? No, so far from that, that many have of late wrote
more

more in your Favour than I think became them, unless you had been in worse Circumstances than you can pretend to have laboured under for some Years past, notwithstanding some little Hardships that may have been put upon you.

The true Reason then of your beginning to write again with so much Pertness and ill Manners against the Church, can be only this, that you think now is your Time to trample the poor Church under your Feet ; you seem to imagine, (and some of your People have openly said it) that you have now a King of your own Perswasion ; and I suppose a House of Lords and Commons of your own Perswasion too, not excepting even the Venerable Bench of Bishops. You probably conclude, that the

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wicked and rebellious Behaviour of some of the professed Members of the Church of *England*, both of the Clergy and Laity, has so exasperated the King and Parliament, and Ministry, that for the Faults of a few in comparison, (tho' bad enough, God knows) they will give up the whole Body of the Church of *England*, Clergy, and Laity, to you, and instead of them receive you into their more immediate Protection and Favour: 'Tis upon this presumptuous and unreasonable Imagination that your present Behaviour seems to be grounded: But for God's sake let me ask you a few plain Questions on this Subject.

First, Do you really think that it would be for the Interest or Honour of his Majesty to do as

you seem to suppose he intends to do, and desire he should do? Or can it be any manner of Service to his Majesty's Cause to suggest such Things at this Time of Day? Has not the *Pretended* Danger of the Church almost brought us to utter Ruin; and will not the *Real* Danger of it (and real it would be if Things should be as you suggest) put us into a higher Ferment than we have ever yet been in? And will such a Ferment help to strengthen King *George's* Title, or secure him in the present Possession of the Throne?

Tho' you don't know who I am, yet you may take my Word for it, that if you once offer to put your Foot into the Stirrup, to get into more Power than you now have, under any Countenance or Protection

tion whatsoever, you will find a more vigorous Opposition made against you than you have ever met with yet ; and that then there will be no such Distinction left as that of *High-Church* and *Low-Church*, when the main Dispute shall be, whether *A Church*, or *No Church*. And can any Man of Sense imagine, that King *George* will ever take such Measures as will really, and upon very good Reason, disgust nine Parts at least in ten of the Nation ? And can you be his true Friends who are daily insinuating such Measures, and declaring both in Sermons and other Papers, your Expectation of his taking them, as soon as you have prepared your People not only to expect, but perhaps demand them ? But it is not his Majesty's Interest

rest only, but his Honour too, that your present Behaviour strikes at. It is but an awkward Way indeed of making your Addresses to him, to tell him, that you expect from his Goodness what he has so often told both you and us, that he will never do : And it is upon that firm Confidence we have, that he will ever maintain his known Character of being punctually true to his Word, that we are under no other Uneasiness on account of your present Behaviour, than that of seeing our Enemies triumphing in it, and flattering themselves, that the King's Friends will, by their Indiscretion, (to make the best of it) do him more Mischiefe than they have been able to do by open Violence. And is not this a Matter worthy your serious Consideration ?

sideration? Can you do a wiser thing at present than to thank God, as we do, for the Preservation of your Liberties, Religious and Civil, and go on to make a good Use of that invaluable Blessing, and not pretend to complement the King's Goodness at the Expence of his Honour and Truth, which however it may be to you, will certainly be to him more valuable than any other Interest whatsoever. But,

Secondly, Let me again ask you for what Reason it is that you expect such great Favours from the present Government? I suppose it is, because you have been true to the Succession, have lent your Money freely to carry on the late War against *France*, and to suppress the present Rebellion at home,

home, and have as yet gone into no Measures in Opposition to the present Establishment. I readily acknowledge all this to be true ; but, *my good Friends*, are you the only Persons who have done this? have none of the true Sons of the Church of *England* shewed the same Zeal in every particular as you have done? and are not they as quiet *under*, as thankful, and as zealous *for*, the present happy Establishment as you can be? And do you think King *George* has not at least as good an Opinion of their Merit as of yours, and as sincere an Intention to preserve and reward them, as he can have to protect you? But how can this be done, if you, as you vainly imagine, are to be the only Favourites under this Reign? and the Church
of

of *England*, *Higb* and *Low* altogether, are to be subjected to you? But besides this, give me leave to tell you, that whatever you may think of it, I can see no greater Merit in any Man's Zeal of late for preserving our present Constitution, than there would be in defending himself against a mad Dog, or the Violence of a Highway-man. Common Sense either did, or might tell every Man, that we could not subsist any longer, either as a free, or a Protestant Nation, upon any other Bottom ; and therefore I don't see that you or we did any more than it was our Interest as well as Duty to do, in the Stand we made against the late Attempts to subject us to Popery, and Arbitrary Power ; and if we had done less, we should have been

been Fools, and something worse.

But it is particularly pleasant, or rather indeed scandalous, to hear Men talk of meriting farther Favours of the Government for lending their Money freely, when they have been so well paid for it already, as many of them have been; and when 'tis more than probable, that not one in a thousand of them ever lent a Penny for the sake of the Government, but only for their own private Profit and Advantage; and thus I shall think, (however uncharitable I may at first View appear for thinking so) till I see a more truly publick Spirit prevail amongst those who are daily laying the greatest Claim to this sort of Merit, which I doubt not but our wise *Solomon*, and his discerning Ministry, will see thro',
and

and not think these Men deserve better than their Neighbours, who seem plainly to have considered themselves more than their Neighbours, or the Publick, in all that they have done.

Thirdly, I will ask you but one Question more, and that shall be, Whether, in the Methods you are now taking, you act so gratefully towards those who, for your sakes, have been stigmatiz'd with the opprobrious Names of *Low Churchmen*, and *Fanaticks*, as you ought to do? You can't but know what an uncomfortable Life many of us have led on this Account for some Years past; how we have been reviled, insulted, abused, all manner of ways, as Enemies to the Church, and Friends to the Principles, as well as Persons of the Dissenters.

Dissenters. God be thank'd, we have
 born all this as became us, and are
 not at all sorry that we have suf-
 fered these Reproaches for the con-
 scientious Discharge of any Part of
 our Christian Duty, and such we
 esteem a true Moderation to be ;
 but do you now reward us for this
 as you ought to do, whilst you are
 endeavouring to deprive us of that
 happy Establishment in the Church,
 which we have ever had nearest
 to our Hearts, in the midst of all
 our moderate Behaviour towards
 you ; and which you may believe
 we can never see giving way to
 any other opposite Scheme of what
 Denomination soever, without the
 sorest Grief of Heart imaginable ;
 for though we think some smaller
 Matters may be altered for the bet-
 ter, yet we as heartily love and
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value our present Church-Government in the Fundamentals of it, in Episcopacy, and an establish'd Liturgy, as any of its Members whosoever. And do you think that we who have suffer'd so much in skreening you from unnecessary Severities, can take it very kindly to be undermined by you, as soon as ever you think you have it in your Power ? I have done, and shall conclude this Paper with begging you to consider seriously what answer you ought to give to these three Questions, which are now laid before you with no other Design but to preserve this Church and Nation, from being even yet ruined by the Folly of some as well as the Treachery of others.



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POST-SCRIPT.

THE Papers referred to are,
Mr. *Roswell's* Sermon on
the Beheading the two condemned
Lords.

Mr. *Owen's* Plain Dealing; or,
Schism without Separation, and
Separation without Schism.

Dr. *Calamy's* Dedication to the
Lady *Levit*.

Lay - Nonconformity justified,
&c.

POST-SCRIPT

THE Papers referred to are
Mr. Rolfe's Sermon on
the Teaching the two condemned
Lords.
Mr. Owen's Plain Dealing;
Schism without Separation; and
Separation without Schism.
Dr. Cawley's Relation to the
Lady Anne.
Lady Anne's Nonconformity justified.

